DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 358 562 EA 025 002

AUTHOR Barrett, Thomas; And Others
TITLE Results of the Year-Round Education Parent, Staff, and Student Surveys.
INSTITUTION Riverside Unified School District, Calif.
PUB DATE Jun 92
NOTE 21p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Assessment; Elementary Schools; Intermediate Grades; Parent Attitudes; *Program Evaluation; *School Schedules; Student Attitudes; Teacher Attitudes; *Year Round Schools
IDENTIFIERS *Riverside Unified School District CA

ABSTRACT

The 1991-92 school year marked the first year of implementation of Year-Round Education (YRE) in seven Riverside Unified School District elementary schools. To assess participant satisfaction with the program, a survey was conducted of parents, all staff, and fourth- through sixth-grade students. The parent survey was conducted in two phases. First, about 30 percent of the parents at each school, including bilingual parents, were contacted by telephone. Next, students took surveys with open-ended questions home to their parents. Findings showed that approximately 70 percent of all respondents reported that they were either very satisfied or satisfied. Although African-American parents and students were slightly less satisfied and Hispanic parents were slightly more satisfied than other ethnic groups, the reported ethnic differences were small. Staff members expressed differences that were inconsistent across survey items and tended to favor one track over another according to the given survey item. Parents and staff said that YRE allowed students to remain focused and retain more of what they learned. Students, teachers, and parents expressed dissatisfaction with large class sizes and changing classrooms. Three graphs and copies of the surveys are included. (LMI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED358562

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Riverside, California

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY
June, 1992

RESULTS OF THE YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION PARENT, STAFF, AND STUDENT SURVEYS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. Ferrett

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Thomas Barrett, Ph.D.
Senior Research Associate

Robert T. Ferrett, Ph.D.
Director
Educational Accountability

Charles L. Beaty, Ph.D.
Deputy Superintendent
Operations

EA 025 002

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

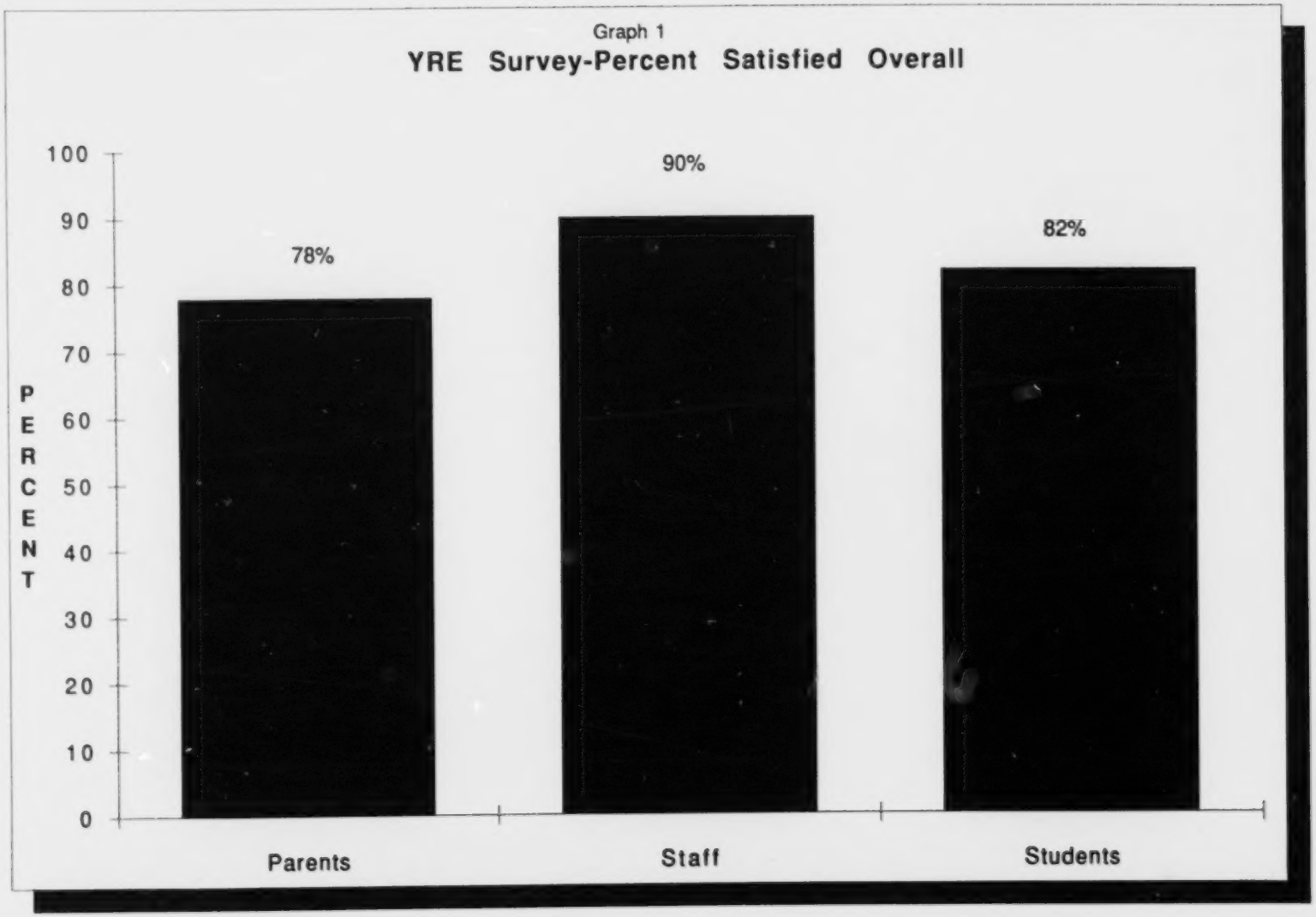
ABSTRACT

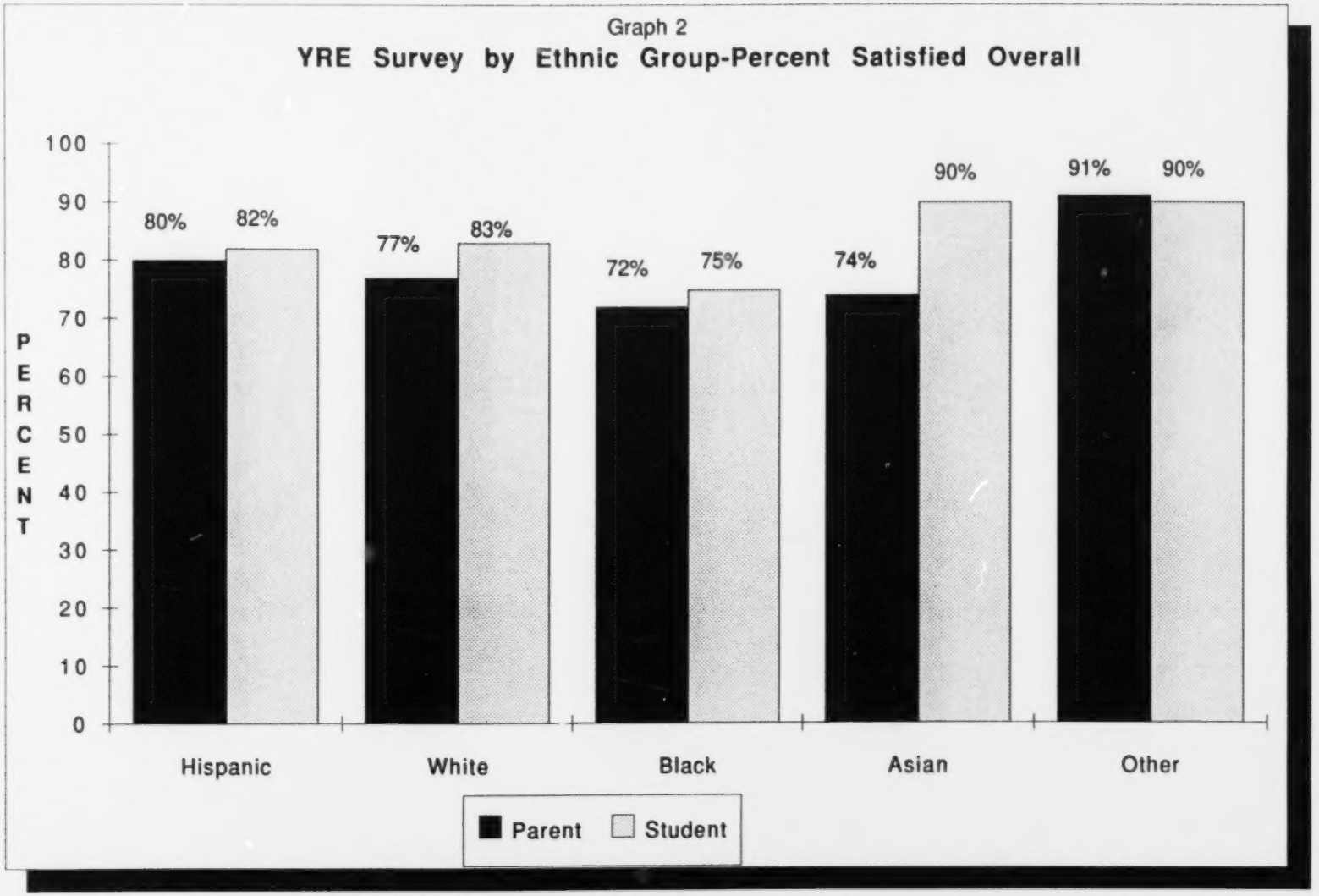
In order to assess the level of satisfaction with year-round education (YRE) in the Riverside Unified School District, parents, staff, and students at our seven YRE schools were surveyed during the spring of 1992.

- Results of the parent telephone survey showed that overall, 78 percent of parents reported satisfaction with the YRE program. One of the most positive indications was given in response to the question asking about the perceived quality of the school program. Parents were least positive about the availability of child care in the community.

- Ninety percent of the staff surveyed were satisfied overall with YRE. They also believe that the quality of the instructional program is good. Certificated staff members felt that students tended to retain more owing to the shorter and more frequent vacations and were happy with this vacation schedule themselves. The areas of greatest concern for staff involved problems with rotating between classrooms and the related problem of storing instructional materials.

- Eighty-two percent of the students surveyed at grades four through six reported overall satisfaction with YRE. They tended to agree with staff that changing classrooms was relatively undesirable but the shorter, more frequent vacations reduced boredom and fatigue.


Graph 1
YRE Survey-Percent Satisfied Overall
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
PERCENT
78%
90%
82%
Parents
Staff
Students


Graph 2
YRE Survey by Ethnic Group-Percent Satisfied Overall
PERCENT
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
80%
82%
77%
83%
72%
75%
74%
90%
91%
90%
Hispanic
White
Black
Asian
Other
Parent
Student

Graph 3

YRE Survey by Track-Percent Satisfied Overall

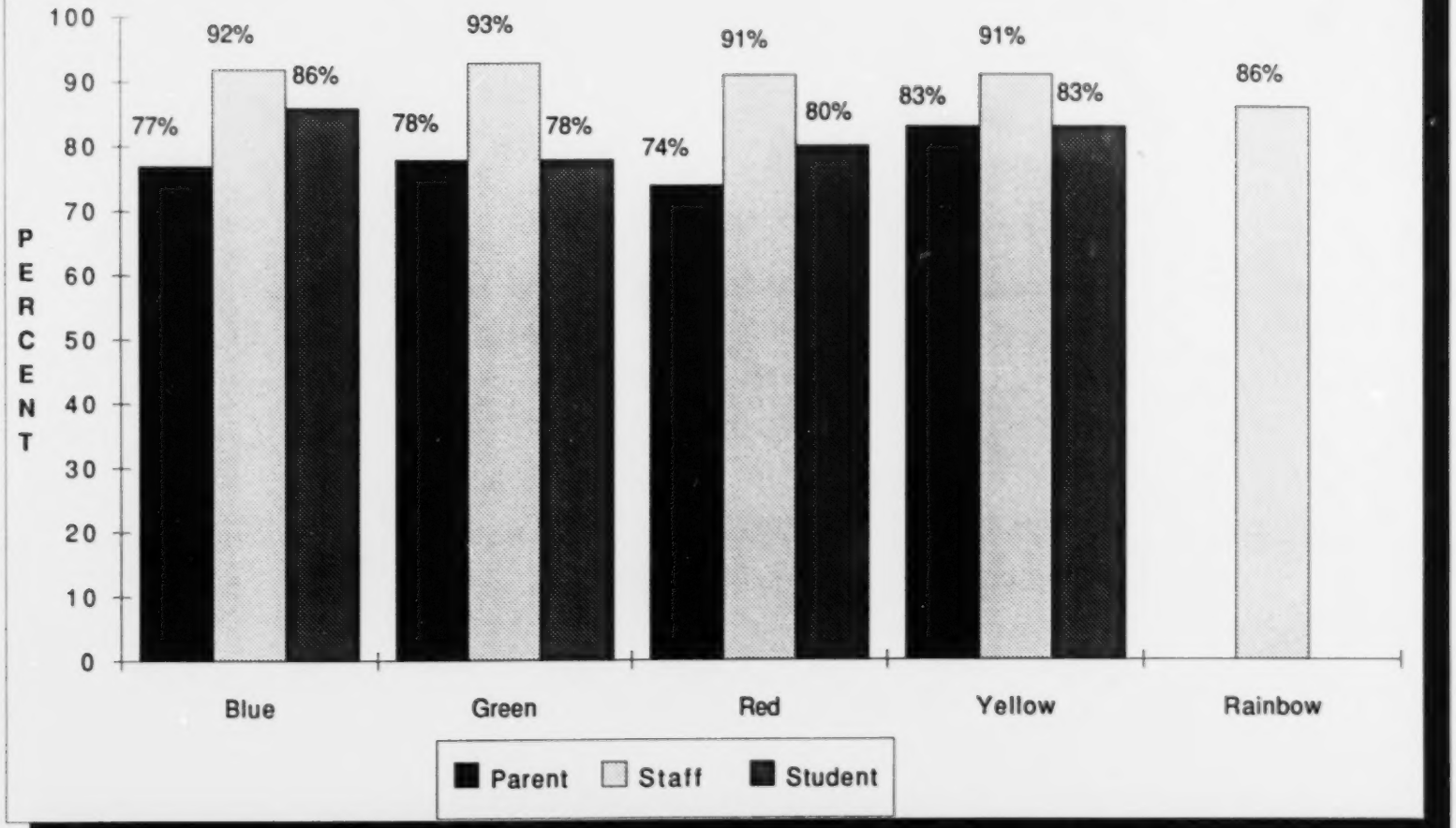


TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT i
Graph 1
YRE Survey-Percent Satisfied Overall ii
Graph 2
YRE Survey by Ethnic Group-Percent Satisfied Overall iii
Graph 3
YRE Survey by Track-Percent Satisfied Overall iv
INTRODUCTION 1
RESULTS 2
RESPONSES TO THE MULTIPLE-RESPONSE ITEMS 2
Parent Telephone Multiple-Response Survey 2
Staff Multiple-Response Survey 3
Student Multiple-Response Survey 3
SUMMARY 4
RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS 5
Parent Comments 5
Staff Comments 5
Student Comments 6
APPENDIX 7
YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION PARENT SURVEY 8
YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION STAFF SURVEY 9
YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION STUDENT SURVEY 11

INTRODUCTION

The 1991-92 school year marked the first year of implementation of Year-Round Education (YRE) in seven RUSD elementary schools. Those schools are: Fremont, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Magnolia, Taft, and Washington. In order to determine the level of satisfaction with the program, the Department of Educational Accountability was charged with the task of conducting a series of parent, staff, and student surveys. Questions for the surveys were developed after reviewing several YRE surveys developed in other school districts and by the California Educational Research Cooperative (CERC). The proposed questions were then reviewed by the YRE principals and other district managers in order to further define the items and to select those that were most relevant. The actual surveys are contained in the Appendix.

The parent survey was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, a random sample of about 30 percent of the parents at each school was drawn. The survey items were administered by telephone over a two-week period in March with every effort made to contact the originally sampled parents. Bilingual callers were utilized to conduct the telephone surveys in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Lao when necessary. In cases where multiple attempts to make contact were unsuccessful, parents in a replacement sample were called. Thus, we have a high level of assurance that the results of the parent telephone survey accurately represent the opinions of all parents of students enrolled in year-round schools.

In the second phase, the same survey was sent home to parents in the hands of the students. This was done to allow all parents to have a chance to provide input especially in response to the two open-ended questions that were too difficult to administer over the phone (1) What else do you like about the year-round program? and (2) How could the year-round education program be improved? A sample of responses to these two open-ended questions was summarized for inclusion in this report. However, the YRE principals have had an opportunity to review the results from all respondents at their school.

The student survey was administered to all students at grades four through six and the staff survey was administered to all staff members both certificated and classified.

RESULTS

The multiple-response sections of the parent and student surveys were summarized districtwide for all respondents, by YRE track, and by ethnic group. The staff survey results were summarized districtwide and by YRE track.

In order to help the reader focus on the survey questions summarized in the narrative, abbreviations of the questions appear in *italics*. For purposes of the narrative summary and Graphs 1, 2, and 3, the "level of satisfaction" referenced is the sum of respondents reporting that they were either "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied."

Following the narrative results for the multiple-response survey items is a summary of the comments made to the open-ended questions on the parent, staff, and student surveys.

RESPONSES TO THE MULTIPLE-RESPONSE ITEMS

Parent Telephone Multiple-Response Survey

In answer to the concluding question "*How satisfied are you overall with the YRE program?*" 78 percent of the parents surveyed reported that they were satisfied (Graph 1). Although there was some variability in level of satisfaction reported for individual items, in general there was a relatively high level of satisfaction evident throughout the survey.

Availability of child care in the community was the area in which parents were least satisfied (66% Satisfied) although it should be pointed out that this could very well be true for traditional track schools as well. It's also an area over which the schools have very little control.

Parents saw the *quality of the school program* in a positive light (86% Satisfied) while they were less positive about how *shorter vacation schedules affected their child's progress* (75% Satisfied).

When results were compared by ethnic group, Black parents reported the lowest degree of *overall satisfaction* (72% Satisfied) while Hispanic parents reported the highest level (80% Satisfied). The differences between the groups, however, were not marked with seven out of ten parents reporting satisfaction even in the least satisfied group (Graph 2).

An analysis by track showed the Yellow track parents to be the most *satisfied overall* (83% Satisfied) with little difference noted between the other tracks (Graph 3).

Staff Multiple-Response Survey

In answer to the concluding question "*How satisfied are you overall with the YRE program*?" 90 percent of the staff surveyed were either "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" (Graph 1).

The area in which staff expressed the least satisfaction was clearly related to *rotating classrooms* (56% Satisfied) and *storage of instructional materials* (78% Satisfied). Staff tended to echo parents by also expressing less satisfaction with *the availability of child care in the community* (77% Satisfied).

In general, staff viewed *student* and *parent attitudes toward YRE* as positive (95% and 87% Satisfied, respectively) and felt that *communication with parents* was satisfactory (97% Satisfied) although classified staff viewed *Parent attitudes toward YRE* less positively (78% Satisfied) than certificated staff (91% Satisfied). Certificated staff were also less positive about *meeting professional growth needs* (79% Satisfied) and *Scheduling staff development* (77% Satisfied).

There was very little difference between tracks regarding *overall satisfaction* (Graph 3). However, with regard to specific items there appear to be differences between tracks. The direction, however, differs according to the specific items. For example, 80 percent of the Red track staff were satisfied with *storage of instructional materials* compared to only 68 percent of the Blue track staff. On the other hand, almost 87 percent of the Blue track staff were satisfied with their *ability to meet professional growth needs* while only 75 percent of the Red track staff were satisfied in this regard. The reader is encouraged to look at the detailed tables to see some of the other differences that are evident.

Student Multiple-Response Survey

Students also showed a high level of overall satisfaction with year-round education. Fully 82 percent of the students surveyed at grades four through six said they were either "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" *overall with the YRE program* (Graph 1).

Staff were not alone in their concern about *changing classrooms*. Students also pointed to this area as the one with which they were least satisfied (71% Satisfied). Students tended to agree with parents that the *shorter vacations affect progress in school* somewhat negatively (79% Satisfied) yet they remain optimistic about *How much they are learning* in the year-round program (92% Satisfied). The student summary by ethnicity (Graph 2) showed that Black students tended to be somewhat less satisfied with *YRE overall* (75% Satisfied) than the other ethnic groups.

SUMMARY

In conclusion, while there were some areas in which students, staff, and parents were more or less satisfied than others, even in areas showing the least satisfaction, typically seven out of ten respondents reported that they were either very satisfied or satisfied. Although Black parents and students were slightly less satisfied than other ethnic groups and Hispanic parents were slightly more satisfied, the ethnic differences reported were small.

There were few track differences reported by parents and students, but there were some notable differences on the staff survey. However, these differences were not consistent across survey items but rather tended to favor one track or the other according to the given item and the differences were often difficult to explain. Certainly, individuals on Rainbow track are less satisfied with personal vacation planning since they have difficulty finding a convenient time to be off duty. But differences between the Blue and Red tracks with regard to storage of instructional materials and ability to meet professional growth needs are hard to explain.

RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The following summary is intended to give the reader a sense of the kinds of responses made to the open-ended questions.

It should be noted that the Parent, Staff, and Student comments contained in the Summary are intended to be representative of comments from those who chose to respond to these items. Therefore, they should not be construed to be representative of the sentiment of all persons surveyed.

Parent Comments

In response to the question "*What else do you like about the year-round education program?*" three comments were commonplace. The most often cited advantage of YRE was that it allowed students (and sometimes staff) to remain focused and enthusiastic owing to more frequent vacations.

The other two comments that were most common referred to the fact that vacations could be planned during less congested times and parents did not have to worry as much about where their children were spending their time as during the traditional summer break.

In response to the question "*How could the year-round education program be improved?*" several themes were evident throughout the comments. These were:

- Find a way to decrease the class size.
- Put middle schools and high schools on YRE also to help with vacation and other planning.
- Provide better child-care options perhaps by coordinating with the city.
- Reduce the amount of time off between sessions.
- Improve communications with parents especially during times students are off track.
- Other common areas of dissatisfaction included the inability of students to participate in community programs such as swimming lessons in the summer, and the fact that some programs are track specific such as GATE and bilingual.

Staff Comments

In response to the question "*What else do you like about the year-round education program?*" typical comments were:

- There is less burnout for students and teachers with the more frequent vacations and students retain more of what they learned.
- The frequent breaks afford an opportunity to visit other programs.

- Having a paycheck each month for twelve months and having the opportunity to make extra pay by substituting are advantages.

- There is greater flexibility for teacher planning.

The question "*How could the year-round education program be improved?*" elicited these typical comments:

- Change classrooms as seldom as possible or at least pay teachers more who have to do it.

- Have roving teachers and clerical staff to help out.

- Spread special programs (e.g., GATE and bilingual) over the four tracks more.

- Hire more teachers as substitutes instead of others who can work for less pay.

- More storage space is needed and it should be centralized space instead of multiple locations.

- Major events like spelling bee, science day, etc. shouldn't require multiple scheduling to accommodate the different tracks.

- The district office should be more aware of accommodating the varying scheduling needs of year-round schools.

Student Comments

When asked "*What else do you like about the year-round education program?*" the most often cited comments addressed:

- The benefits of more frequent vacations in decreasing boredom and improving retention.

- Advantages of fewer students at school at one time-specifically, smaller lunch lines and more room on the playground.

- Vacations can involve going to different places during the year.

The question "How could the year-round education program be improved?" resulted in the following kinds of comments:

- Having shorter vacations and more time in school would improve learning.

- Not changing classrooms would be a plus.

- Having two tracks off at a time would be an improvement.

- Getting a spring vacation recess like at Christmas would be better.

- Having GATE classes available on all tracks would be an improvement.

APPENDIX

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION PARENT SURVEY

Directions: Please take a few minutes to indicate your opinion about the following statements by circling the number to the right of each statement which best reflects your feelings. **Please fold and staple or tape the completed survey and have your child return it to his/her teacher by Thursday, April 23.** In order to keep your responses confidential, please do not put your name on the survey. Thank you

Was your child's current track assignment your: (Please check one.)

❑ First Choice ❑ Second Choice ❑ Third Choice ❑ Assigned as Space Available

How satisfied are you with: **(Please Circle.)**

		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied
1.	Your child's track assignment.	1	2	3
2.	Having a smaller number of students on campus at any one time.	1	2	3
3.	Availability of child care in the community.	1	2	3
4.	Your child's ability to participate in special programs (e.g., GATE, Bilingual, Special Education, Chapter 1, etc.)	1	2	3
5.	Your child's ability to participate in special school activities (e.g., Science Fair, Book Fairs, Skills Day, school performances, etc.)	1	2	3
6.	The quality of the school program your child receives in year-round education.	1	2	3
7.	How shorter vacations affect your child's progress in school.	1	2	3
8.	The school's efforts to communicate with you about what is happening at school.	1	2	3
9.	Your overall satisfaction with the year-round program.	1	2	3

10. What else do you like about the year-round education program?

_____

_____

11. How could the year-round education program be improved?

_____

_____

(Please use the backside for additional comments.)

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION STAFF SURVEY

Directions: Please take a few minutes to indicate your opinion about the following statements by circling the number to the right of each statement which best reflects your feelings. **Please put your completed survey in the attached envelope and seal. Personally give the envelope to your principal's secretary by Thursday, March 19. (By March 27 for Red Track.)** Thank you.

What is your current position? (Please check one.)

- ❑ Site Administrator
- ❑ Classroom Teacher
- ❑ Resource Specialist
- ❑ LSH Teacher
- ❑ SDC Teacher
- ❑ Chapter 1 Teacher
- ❑ CPS
- ❑ Other Certificated
- ❑ Office Staff
- ❑ Custodial Staff
- ❑ Instructional Aide
- ❑ Cafeteria Staff
- ❑ Noon Supervisor
- ❑ Other Classified

How long have you been at this school? (Check one.)

❑ Less than 1 year ❑ 1 to 5 years ❑ 6 to 10 years ❑ 11 to 15 years ❑ More than 15 years

Total years of experience in education? (Check one.)

❑ Less than 1 year ❑ 1 to 5 years ❑ 6 to 10 years ❑ 11 to 15 years ❑ More than 15 years

What is your track assignment? (Check one.)

❑ Red ❑ Blue ❑ Green ❑ Yellow ❑ Rainbow

How satisfied are you with: **(Please Circle.)**

		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Does Not Apply
1.	Your track assignment.	1	2	3	4
2.	Rotating classrooms.	1	2	3	4
3.	Storage of instructional materials.	1	2	3	4
4.	Having a smaller number of students on campus at any one time.	1	2	3	4
5.	Availability of district office staff to answer questions (e.g., curriculum, payroll, insurance, etc.).	1	2	3	4
6.	The annual deep cleaning.	1	2	3	4
7.	Weekly gardening.	1	2	3	4
8.	Your personal vacation planning.	1	2	3	4
9.	Availability of child care in the community for your own children.	1	2	3	4
10.	The effect of more frequent and shorter vacations on your professional effectiveness.	1	2	3	4
11.	Earning additional salary by substituting when off track.	1	2	3	4

(Continued on the backside.)

How satisfied are you with:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Does Not Apply
12. The scheduling of staff development activities.	1	2	3	4
13. Classroom learning environment in a year-round program.	1	2	3	4
14. Meeting your professional growth needs in a year-round schedule.	1	2	3	4
15. The effect of more frequent and shorter vacations on student learning/ performance in school.	1	2	3	4
16. School communication with parents.	1	2	3	4
17. Communication with staff.	1	2	3	4
18. The planning of instruction in a year-round education program.	1	2	3	4
19. Staff attitudes toward year-round education.	1	2	3	4
20. Student attitudes toward year-round education program.	1	2	3	4
21. Parent attitudes toward year-round education program.	1	2	3	4
22. Your overall satisfaction with the year-round program.	1	2	3	4

23. What else do you like about the year-round education program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

24. How could the year-round education program be improved?

_____

_____

_____

_____

RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
YEAR-ROUND EDUCATION STUDENT SURVEY

Directions: Please take a few minutes to give us your opinion about year-round education. Use a #2 pencil to mark your answers to questions 1-8 on the separate answer sheet you have received. Use this page to answer questions 9 and 10.Your responses will be kept confidential. Thank you

How satisfied are you with:

		Very Not Satisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied
1.	The track you are on in school.	A	B	C
2.	Your vacation schedule.	A	B	C
3.	Being able to participate in school activities.	A	B	C
4.	Changing classrooms after each vacation.	A	B	C
5.	How shorter vacations affect your progress in school.	A	B	C
6.	Having a smaller number of students at school at any one time (e.g., lunch lines, and space on the playground, etc.)	A	B	C
7.	How much you are learning in year-round school?	A	B	C
8.	Your overall satisfaction with year-round school.	A	B	C

9. What else do you like about the year-round school program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. How could the year-round education program be improved?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Please use the backside for additional comments.)